



AN EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY USING THE  
Q&A METHOD

*by*  
**Henry Harlow**

### **What do I need to know first about Internet marketing?**

“In modern business, it is not the crook who is feared most, it is the honest man who doesn’t know what he is doing.” *Pablo Casals*

There are tons of vendors out there who want to sell you websites and Internet marketing services. Most are honest people who simply don’t know what they are doing. In many cases, they are attempting to sell you something that is overpriced and that won’t produce any new clients for you at all, let alone good clients. In other cases you are flat being robbed by someone who preys on your ignorance. The attorneys I have worked with report to me that the whole Internet marketing process confuses them. They don’t know who to believe. Some have spent considerable sums already on websites with little or no results. I aim to stop all that. So keep reading.

### **Do I need Internet marketing?**

Yes. According to [www.InternetWorldStats.com](http://www.InternetWorldStats.com) as of June, 2008 in North America (USA and Canada) 71.1% of North Americans are using the Internet. Additionally according to Reuters News Services in 2007 they predicted there would be over nine million legal services searches done on the Internet. Do some of you remember when you resisted (or an attorney you knew resisted) getting an email address? Eventually prospects and clients demanded it. Do you know for some years now prospective clients and clients expect you to have a website or they think you may be behind the times if you don’t? Within as little as 2 or 3 years video will be expected on your website as well by prospective clients. Finally, ever wonder why the yellow page companies all have huge websites and want to see you listing on their website? The answer is the yellow pages are going away in the not too distant future since people are searching the Internet and not going to the yellow pages (not that I recommend yellow pages).

### **What is/is not Internet marketing?**

Having a website is not Internet marketing. At a minimum you do need at least a “brochure website” of a few pages, however, that website is unlikely to get you new business and is definitely not Internet marketing. If your budget only allows you to have a

brochure site so be it and you need to change that as soon as funding allows. The rest of this document is going to help you get clear on what Internet marketing is all about.

### **Where does Internet marketing begin?**

It begins with you becoming an educated consumer and then keyword research. Researching your practice's best keywords will tell us what words your prospective clients are using to search for legal services on search engines, what legal services your prospective clients are the most interested in, what your prospective client is thinking, how to attract these prospective clients to your site at the search engine instead of going to your competitors site, what your competitors are doing/not doing, what content to write for each of your top keywords (it is recommend writing a page each to at least the top 20 keywords), what are the words to use for PPC advertising and how to begin search engine optimization. If you have not adequately completed keyword research using software tools like Wordtracker you have not done adequate keyword research and you are guessing. This guessing is going to cost you dearly down the road in how high your site can rank on search engines and thus in how many new clients it can deliver to you. I would not skip this step no matter what you plan to do after it. You can have this process completed by a professional for under \$800 and maybe less. You can do it yourself at Wordtracker.com; however, you can't possibly do it as well as a professional who does this type of research. That said it is better you do it yourself than not do it at all. Doing it yourself is like someone going online and buying a legal form for some important legal aspect when what they really need is a lawyer to draft the document to their needs. Go to [www.YourLegalPractice.com](http://www.YourLegalPractice.com) for the details on this process and see what a professional can do for you in keywords research. If you don't use this vendor for keyword research then I would at least deliver the information from this website to your vendor and ask them to deliver similar information to you in their keyword research process.

### **You mentioned, "...tools like Wordtracker..." with respect to keyword research. What is Wordtracker?**

Wordtracker is a software tool that can be used to thoroughly research your keywords. Wordtracker is at least arguably the best keyword research tool in the marketplace and there are others. You can go to [www.Wordtracker.com](http://www.Wordtracker.com) to get all the details. At the very least do your own or get your current vendor to use this tool for the keyword research. Not perfect but way better than guessing. The "runners up" in keyword research would be the following:

[Keyword Discovery click here to go to the site.](#)

[WordZe click here to go to the site](#)

Google Keyword Tool is not the same as the above as it does not get you as much data like KEI, competition, etc., is based on pay per click at Google and if you want to go there [click here](#). If you want to read an article on why it is useless as a keyword tool [click here](#). If you want an in depth complimentary course on keywords and how they can be used go here: <http://www.wordtracker.com/usingkeywords/?source=freetool>

**You mentioned, “...what content to write for each of your top keywords...” What are you talking about exactly?**

I am talking about what is known as the CTPM model of Internet marketing developed by Ken Evoy M.D. in 1997. This model works because it is in total alignment with how the Internet works. The C is the first part of the model and it stands for Content – you create what content is in demand (you determine what is in demand from the keyword research). The T is Traffic – you attract targeted traffic from the keywords. The P is for pre-sell – pre-sell the targeted traffic (using such things as newsletters, RSS feeds, free downloads, e-books, auto responders, audio, video, ASK campaigns, teleclasses, etc.). The M is Monetize – this is where you convert these pre-sold prospective clients to clients easily. Another key distinction that needs to be wrapped inside the CTPM model is what I call the “Middleton Model.” The Middleton Model is about having a marketing funnel that leads your visitor thru the site just like you would lead someone down a path that you want them to take. You want your visitor to select your most wanted response so you need to design the marketing funnel to maximize the selection of your most wanted response. Usually the most wanted response (MWR) is give me your first name and email address and I will give you something now of value to you. It can be more but it is at least something of value like a white paper on a particular topic. If you go to [www.YourLegalPractice.com](http://www.YourLegalPractice.com) you will see a basic example of the Middleton Model wrapped inside a CTPM model website. This area I am talking about is sometimes referred to as a “marketing funnel” in marketing and is definitely something to be thought through very carefully in Internet marketing before you even begin writing your site. If you want to see a lawyer website with a marketing funnel go here: [www.EstateLegalPlanning.com](http://www.EstateLegalPlanning.com)

**Tell Me More About this “Middleton Model” Marketing Funnel**

Robert Middleton is a very successful marketing consultant who helps service professionals to build their businesses. He formed his firm in 1984 and went online in 1996 which caused him to become wildly successful. He has developed a number of free resources and products. The product of most interest to you would likely be The Web Site Tool Kit at \$79 if you want to really get deeper into the Middleton Model. You can add a website assessment added for \$70 more. I would suggest you pick up his free stuff while visiting as well. When you go to the site click on the tab on the top that says “Marketing Action Track” and then click on the left side on the button for the web site tool kit. You can [get to the](#)

[Middleton site by clicking here](#). You have not heard the end of “the marketing funnel” since this is critical to your success online.

**You also mentioned “...how to begin search engine optimization.” What is meant by search engine optimization (SEO) and exactly what is it?**

There is no mystery here on how to do SEO so don't let anyone bamboozle you on that one. Recently Google published a [Search Engine Optimization Starter Guide](#) that can give you some idea of what SEO is about and do note the operative words in the title are “starter guide.” Also know Google reports they use about 200 different factors in deciding how to rank a site although some of those factors are major and some of them are minor. The stages in SEO are basically as follows:

1. Keyword research and strategy
2. Determine site structure and the navigation or marketing funnel
3. Content – more the better added regularly, however it must be quality content written to keywords and SEO standards
4. Link building – particularly one way link building
5. Monitoring number 1-4 above on some regular basis

For now know SEO begins with appropriate keyword research. If you have not done that you are dead in the water since this is the foundation of everything that comes after it. The next step is the “C” or content mentioned earlier in the CTPM model. You will need to write “keyword optimized” content to each of your top 20 keywords or another way to say this is writing your content in the way that search engines want to see it so they rank you higher than your competitors. Your content needs to fit together in a site plan (the term site plan refers to the order your pages will appear and how they link to one another) that has an appropriate pyramid type structure as well as Middleton model configuration. This pyramid type structure includes your home page (the peak of the pyramid) themed keyword phrase being supported by all the tier two pages (the next layer of the pyramid) and their tier three pages (usually the base of your pyramid although you could go deeper) supporting them resulting in higher rankings for all of your pages on your site.

There are some technical aspects to SEO as well like the use of clean HTML, heading text, meta tags, alt tags, site map, etc., however, mercifully I won't go into those since they should be known to your technical person, however, the bottom line is put nothing in the way of the search engines spiders (spiders are sent out from the search engine to “read” the sites on the Internet) being able to “read” your site like fancy flash pages get in the way big time for instance. To know more in depth about keyword optimization you can go to [www.Wordtracker.com](http://www.Wordtracker.com) where they have a really fine Keyword Research Guide if you want to know more of the details.

All of what I just told you in the last paragraph is known as “on site optimization” strategies or “on page” optimization. There is also “off site” or “off page” optimization as well involved in SEO. Off site optimization means getting one-way links from high-ranking pages of other sites that are related to your top 20 keywords (there we are again with that keyword research being vital) that link to your site. Search engines see these links as like a “vote” for your site. The more high quality “votes” you have the higher they will rank your site. The term “link popularity” is used to describe this process. The royal road to high quality links is having (here he goes again) keyword researched and keyword optimized quality content on your website. You get these links from website directories, article directories, online forums, press releases, etc. (more on this topic later). I left out reciprocal links because most SEO authorities think they are no longer worth the effort since they are difficult to get and don’t really contribute much (or can even hurt) to your page ranking. SEO is a full time specialty in itself. If you want to get a sense of how complex then go to this site that is a “social networking” and news site for SEO experts here: <http://sphinn.com/>

The best strategies used in link building include the following:

1. Locate sites that are linking to your site if any that have the highest PageRank. Also locate the highest PageRank sites linked to your competitors
2. Work on how you can maintain the links you already have on the high ranking sites on pages of their site that are high page ranked on their site. Figure out how you can get links on the sites where your competitors have links on pages where they have high ranks.
3. One way to find out what links are pointing to your site or a competitor’s site go to [www.Yahoo.com](http://www.Yahoo.com) and put in the following as a search:

Link: `www.yourdomainname.com` (note: no space between anything)

Link: your competitor’s domain name like above.

4. If you are very serious about link building and have a budget for it look here: <http://www.ericward.com/netpost2.html>. This is Eric Ward whose credentials are impeccable including an endorsement from Matt Cutts who is head of Google’s WebSpam team and that does not happen often I can tell you. If you want to learn more about “do it yourself” then take his monthly report and access to his coming membership site for \$149 per year at <http://www.ericward.com/wardreport.html>.
5. Whatever you do never, ever purchase a link from someone. This is the kiss of death. For example [www.FindLaw.com](http://www.FindLaw.com) was found by Google selling links to attorneys by offering attorneys the opportunity to write an article and placing it on the high PageRanked FindLaw site with a link back to them. Well, they lost two PageRanks when Google found out dropping from a 7 to a 5. That said it seems all may be forgiven by Google or the “misunderstanding” was worked out as at this writing the Google PageRank for FindLaw is now up to 8. FindLaw “fixed the upset” by making all of the links they are selling to

attorneys “no follow” links and thus “legal” but that makes the links of no use to an attorney for search engine ranking purposes. For the details on the affair go here:

<http://www.oilman.ca/random/shame-shame-shame-findlaw/>

<http://kevin.lexblog.com/2008/08/articles/search-engine-optimization/findlaw-gaming-google-and-possibly-scamming-lawyer-customers>

<http://www.getlawyerleads.com/2008/08/findlaw-violating-google-guidelines-and-scamming-customers>

### **I have heard of “black hat” SEO. What is that and why is it called “black hat.”**

One way to describe black hat SEO is you and your techie will use sneaky ways to try to make your site look good to a search engine spider when it really is not good or not that good. Sort of like putting lipstick on a pig and hoping nobody notices. Black hat SEO techniques are not illegal and are considered unethical since they are attempting to give those not playing by the search engine rules an unfair advantage. The SEO people who “follow the rules” are termed “white hat” SEO. If you get caught using black hat techniques they will punish you by banning your site from their results or at the very least lowering your ranking so low that your site might as well not exist. So you are playing a game of cat and mouse or spy versus spy with the search engine. Do some people do it? Oh yes, there are even websites that discuss the techniques, training programs with private email groups that exchange techniques. Search under the term black hat SEO and you can find some. Does it work for them? Yes indeed it can and does work for them at least for the short term. Why? Well, some of these types of people like the thrill of beating the system and getting away with things so they manage to stay one step ahead of the “Google Police” figuratively speaking at least most of the time but not all of the time. It is a calculated risk. Do lawyers use these techniques? Yes, a very small minority do. Mostly in high stakes practice areas like PI in major metro markets has been my experience. There are also “gray hat” SEO folks who do a bit of black hat and a bit of white hat.

What are some of these black hat techniques? Well, without getting real techie here since I am not a techie but an Internet marketing expert they include:

Keyword stuffing or keyword spamming = putting a lot of irrelevant keywords on your webpage just to draw traffic. For more details go here:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keyword\\_stuffing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keyword_stuffing)

Hidden text = this method is placing words on a site page in such a way that the visitor can’t see it but the spider can read it thus giving a false impression to the search engine what the page is about. For more details go here:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hidden\\_text](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hidden_text)

Cloaking = this method is designed around finding out when the search engine spider arrives at your site and serving up content to the spider that is different than what is served up for a visitor. Again here the technique is giving false information to the spider. For more details go here:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloaking>

Doorway Pages = this method is designed around quickly taking a visitor from the page they clicked on to go to at the search engine to an entirely different page with different content. This is related to cloaking. For more details go here:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doorway\\_pages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doorway_pages)

Linking schemes = creating ways to link with other sites so you can fool the search engine into thinking you have a lot of links and thus are a popular site. For more details go here:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Link\\_farm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Link_farm)

You also might want to look at Google here to see what they say about this topic in their Webmaster Guidelines:

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=35769>

This is not an exhaustive list of black hat approaches of course but only the common techniques since new ones are invented as things move forward on the net. Naturally, I don't recommend going for black hat techniques. If someone recommends you go that route I would run quickly away. There really is no need to pay the high fees black hats will charge and take the risk. You can accomplish what you want via following the tried and true methods. You will sleep better. Also, it is most likely if you are getting beaten in the rankings by a competitor using black hat tactics they will get caught at some point and your problem will be solved. You can also report them:

Google here:

<http://www.google.com/contact/spamreport.html>

Yahoo here:

[http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/search/spam\\_abuse.html](http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/search/spam_abuse.html)

**How can I tell if someone is an ethical SEO vendor?**

First they won't promise you anything specific in getting higher rankings and their own website has a decent Google PageRank (3 minimum or better above that). They will tell you exactly how they plan to get you better rankings and they will tell you that it will take at least weeks if not months for your rankings to improve. Thus if someone says they will get you number one rankings at Google forget that person. If they tell you they have some magic code or script to put on your site this is not a good sign. If they tell you it is all about Meta tags this is also not a good sign although Meta tags have some importance in SEO. If they say to you that the Google Toolbar PageRank is everything in SEO another bad sign. All ethical SEO professionals read the same material, go to the same workshops and are in the same online discussion groups. There is no magic secret and if they say they have some kind of a SEO Guru on the team forget that one. The search engines all want good content written to keywords with good keyword density. They want clean code on your site so they can read it all. They like to see you build over time more good one-way quality links from sites that have the same or a higher PageRank than your site. Lastly, they like to see you build more good content over time of about one new page per month. These last few sentences are a bit simplified but substantially accurate on what it takes to rank high on search engines. If your SEO expert is talking like this you have a decent one. If you want to look even deeper into this topic then go to this site on Google and read what they say in the article "What's an SEO? Does Google recommend working with companies that offer to make my site Google-friendly?" You can find it here:

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=35291>

If you want to look even deeper still look at Yahoo and ASK here by clicking on them:

[Yahoo content guidelines](#)

[MSN/LIVE Webmaster Guidelines](#)

[Ask.com terms of service and spam policy](#)

[Ask.com editorial guidelines](#)

### **You mentioned "...your page ranking." What is page ranking and how do I get my pages ranked?**

You don't have to do anything to get your web pages ranked. It happens when the search engines send their spiders out to read your site. Google PageRank (PR) is the standard on the Internet for success since at this writing about 60% of people on the Internet go to Google to do their searching and the other major search engines (Yahoo, MSN and ASK) use similar models as Google. So if you rank high at Google you will rank high anywhere. The Google PR system is from 0 to 10 with 10 being high and 0 being low. Probably more than 98% of sites on the Internet are ranked 0, 1, or 2. I do recommend you go to Google

and get a Google Tool Bar since then you can see the Google PR they have given you and every other webpage you ever visit. This is a very useful tool. You can find it here:  
[http://toolbar.google.com/T4/index\\_pack.html](http://toolbar.google.com/T4/index_pack.html)

The Google Tool Bar tells you how you are doing with your website. Next it tells you how well your competitors are doing with their websites, which tells you what you need to do to get a higher Google PR so you are above them in the search engine results. Finally, it tells you how well your vendor has done for you and if you are searching for a new vendor it can tell you if they know what they are doing since they should show you sites they have built that have good Google PR. For sure that vendor's site should have a good Google PR don't you think? Now, having just said a lot about the importance of the Google PR believe it or not it is not the end all and be all in terms of getting to the first page of the search engine results pages (SERP). Generally the higher your Google PR the higher you will be in SERPs. It does happen at times that someone with a lower PR will be higher in a given keyword than someone with a higher keyword since PR is not the whole story but still a major part of the story. Find it here:

[http://toolbar.google.com/T4/index\\_pack.html](http://toolbar.google.com/T4/index_pack.html)

There is another ranking system called Alexa that is not one you need to be as aware of that is based on Alexa toolbar users (well over 10 million of them last I knew) and where they are going, however, you can get their toolbar at Alexa.com. Alexa ranking is based on the lowest number being the best and the highest number being the worst. A low number is under 500,000 thus indicating a website that is in the top 2% of all websites in the world in terms of the traffic that comes to their site. For example CNN.com is #26, GE.com is 4,719, Google is #3, Yahoo is #1 and MSN is #2 at the time I wrote this report. The poor Alexa ranks are in the millions with most websites on the Internet being Alexa ranked "no data" not being at all unusual. Bottom line even Alexa itself says "Generally, Traffic rankings of 100,000+ should be regarded as not reliable because the amount of data we receive is not statistically significant." Your site is likely to be "no data" ranked, as are most lawyer sites by far.

Well, long story. If you want the rest of the story beyond this on Alexa go here:

[www.alexa.com/site/help/traffic\\_learn\\_more](http://www.alexa.com/site/help/traffic_learn_more)

So be more concerned about your Google PR. If you have an Alexa rank at all as a lawyer you are doing something right.

**You have been talking about "competitors" a lot. Who are my competitors on the Internet?**

Your competitors on the Internet are those people who are trying to rank high at the search engines for the same keywords as you are trying to rank high with. If your down the street lawyer competitor knows nothing about keyword research and how to build an Internet marketing system then he will not be much of a competitor for you on the Internet. Fortunately or unfortunately most lawyers are doing it all wrong with vendors who are over charging and under delivering. You have a great opportunity to get out in front of the pack and stay there because by the time they wake up you will be so far out in front they almost certainly won't be able to catch you.

### **Somewhere way back you mentioned “RSS”. What is RSS?**

RSS stands for “Really Simple Syndication”. Trying to stay up with all the new information on the Internet is clearly difficult. What if you had a really simple way to get the new information posted at your favorite websites or get their newsletters without getting caught in spam filters? That is what RSS is designed to do. You sign up on the web site of one of your favorites for RSS and they will send information (text, audio or video) to your RSS news reader on your computer or to your web based news reader (I use Yahoo.com). Where can you get these news readers? Here are some options:

#### **For Windows**

[www.Newzcrawler.com](http://www.Newzcrawler.com)

[www.newsgator.com/NGOLProduct.aspx?ProdId=FeedDemon](http://www.newsgator.com/NGOLProduct.aspx?ProdId=FeedDemon)

[www.awasu.com/](http://www.awasu.com/)

#### **For Macintosh**

[www.newsfirerss.com/](http://www.newsfirerss.com/)

[www.newsgator.com/NGOLProduct.aspx?ProdID=NetNewsWire](http://www.newsgator.com/NGOLProduct.aspx?ProdID=NetNewsWire)

#### **For Web Based**

[www.bloglines.com/](http://www.bloglines.com/)

<http://my.yahoo.com/>

[www.newsgator.com/ngs/default.aspx](http://www.newsgator.com/ngs/default.aspx)

While this technology is still new it is growing. Some Internet marketing experts think it will overtake email as the “killer application” on the Internet in a few years since it fixes the spam problem and reduces the number of newsletters coming to people's inboxes. It is good but probably not that good. Right now I would put it on your site if you offer a newsletter or add content regularly since people who use RSS are going to be very interested prospects if they sign up on your site using RSS.

**You said earlier “over charging and under delivering.” What should I expect to spend on an Internet marketing site with a vendor?**

You may or may not have to “start over” if you have a site currently. Sometimes it is cheaper to throw away what you have and start from scratch. The costs on “fixing” an existing site vary so widely I can’t really give you numbers. I will write my answer from here assuming you will be doing a new site. If you are looking for a “value vendor” (one who is not the cheapest but also not the most expensive) to build a new website with all of the factors I have spoken about in place you will need to expect to spend from \$13,000 to \$16,000 for the new website. This website should have 20 to 30 pages in total, the entire “on site” SEO in place, all the necessary ingredients for Internet marketing and a foundation that enables you to grow the site bigger. The fee should include the services of a Webmaster, Internet marketing expert, keyword researcher, html writer, web designer, technician, and website copywriter. If you want a custom designed site in terms of look and feel then add about \$2,000 (or more) for this factor. With video think \$2,000 to \$3,000 more if you get it done professionally although there are ways to cut corners here sometimes via college level students or trade school students. Doing a simple welcome video for the home page could be done for under \$1,000, even well under \$1,000 fairly easily.

If you are looking for someone who is just going to do the webmaster role (think of this person as being much like a “general contractor” who is building your dream house) and who will assess your current website circumstances in detail, make a plan for how to improve your circumstances via your current vendor, manage your current vendor so they implement that plan or if necessary make the recommendation to you to leave your current vendor as well as find you another appropriate vendor you can expect to pay about \$75 to \$135 per hour for this person to do the job for you.

A good “one stop shop” is Richard Cannon who can do any of the above. Richard is a SBI Certified Webmaster and can be reached at (505) 286-7943. If you want to view his in depth Internet Marketing information for attorneys go here: <http://www.yourlegalpractice.com/attorney-marketing.html>.

That said he is not the only vendor option we will be talking about in this document and he may not be the right one for you for a host of reasons.

**That is more than I expected to spend. Are there other options?**

Yes. For \$800 to \$1,000 you can have what is commonly known as a “name-squeeze page” or and “ASK” site. Both of these options are indeed Internet marketing strategies. The other option is a “brochure” site (maybe even under \$500) that is NOT an Internet marketing site and you will likely throw it away at some point.

You can build a smaller Internet marketing site with just bare bones but all the foundations in place so you don't have to throw it away for about \$9,000 or \$10,000 but it won't be as robust as the bigger sites and won't get as much traffic as the bigger option above. Later you can add pages (a must – like a page per month for solo and small firms).

The maybe under \$500 option is via [www.guru.com](http://www.guru.com) (a virtual marketplace complete with a mediated process) where you can find cheap vendors (think India, Singapore, New Zealand, South Africa and Europeans here at \$12 to \$50 per hour) as well as value vendors (think \$50 to \$135 per hour in the USA). You must have some sort of web presence so you don't look totally behind the times. Soon video on a site will be required so you don't look behind the times.

The last option is to do it yourself via Site Sell at <http://service-selling.sitesell.com> for under \$300 - please only take this on if you are in dire circumstances. Your time can be spent better on other referral building strategies than learning how to build a website for yourself. If you can afford to spend about \$1599 plus \$49 per month Site Sell will build a 10 page Internet marketing type site for you for \$1599 and \$49 per month. This is a way better option than most vendors who will charge you that much just to build a website with no Internet marketing abilities. They are a very good option I assure you of that.

The material below is designed to give you some basis for comparison between a 9 page Cannon Fire Marketing site as compared to a 10 page “Core Package” from Site Sell Services I just reviewed above. I will begin with Site Sell Services first:

### **Site Sell Services Option Beginning Model Site**

Features List:

1. 7 content pages and 3 support pages – thus can target 7 pages for keywords via SEO and pull in traffic. \$1599 is the fee for this part of the process. First 10 pages will be Home, About, Contact, and 7 more pages of keyword focused content pages. You also pay \$49 per month which includes your annual hosting fee which would be \$299 annually if all they did was host your site for you.
2. Blog capability and set up
3. Newsletter system capability and set up
4. Auto responder capability and set up

5. Google Local submission with map to your office if desired included.
6. RSS capability and set up
7. All submissions to major search engines
8. SBI “look and feel” template must be used – see samples here:  
<http://services.sitesell.com/sample-sites.html>. If you want a custom site they can do that for you with prices beginning at \$2400. This may seem like a high price to the uninitiated but it is reasonable for a custom site.
9. All SBI support systems...many, many....like user discussion groups on every topic related to getting traffic etc.
10. You own it and you control it.
11. This fee does include writing the site although they will expect input from you and likely ask you to “heavy edit” what they wrote so it is in your voice. You can get a professional writer depending on who is used that can run from \$25 to \$75 per hour to support this process if you think. With only 7 content pages needing writing support we are talking 3 hours or so maybe - my educated guess on these numbers.
12. Unlimited email accounts, however they all go to one mail box so not individualized mail boxes.

Further detailed SBI information can be found here:

<http://services.sitesell.com> = this is the overview site for SBI for service sellers

<http://services.sitesell.com/additional-packages.html> = this is the “up sell” from the basic package of \$1599 plus \$49 per month. This boils down to \$99 per hour for custom work and \$500 for each package of 5 additional content pages added to your site.

<http://services.sitesell.com/guaranteed-clicks-more-info.html> = this is the pay per click program they will operate for you. They run from \$79 to \$380 per month depending on how many visitors you want to drive to your site and the nature of your business. There is a minimum 6 month commitment but you can opt out early with a penalty fee.

<http://services.sitesell.com/faq.html> = this is the frequently asked questions section for the Site Sell Services program

**Henry's quick and dirty assessment:** A good option. A much better option for the money than any other vendor I know about for the price – and I have checked out a lot of vendors in 14 years online. They can be trusted to not “take you to the cleaners” and offer you up sells that won't add value and return on investment to your Internet marketing effort. Many advantages over others I am sure.

One disadvantage is your ongoing payment of \$49 per month. Now that includes your domain hosting fee so if you just bought a hosting package from them it would be \$299 per year anyway. So you are really paying \$289 more per year for this service. Over ten years that would be \$2,890 more than a Cannon Fire Marketing built site.

A second disadvantage is their designated “marketing funnel” is more limited (although a good one) than a custom “marketing funnel” would allow. Also, you only can have one email box. This means you can have several email addresses but they all will go to one box. This means for most of you this will require you to get email service somewhere else with a different domain name. This is a hassle and a small added cost through [www.DomainHostingPlus.com](http://www.DomainHostingPlus.com) at a low price from a reliable provider. Lastly the personnel you will be working with at Site Sell Services are to some extent implementing a “system” so they are not thinking as much about you and your unique needs as much as they are thinking about making you fit into their system. The system they are using is much, much superior to anything out there for the price that I know about so it is a very good Internet marketing system. Make no mistake about that fact. It just has limitations to the “customization” of the marketing funnel.

### **Cannon Fire Marketing Basic Internet Marketing Package**

Estimated cost: \$4600. These numbers are not exact. They are very close estimates...final could run a bit more or a bit less...define “a bit” as a few hundred more but it is unlikely it will be a few hundred less as the bid is designed to be “dead on” given current knowledge about the average project...new

knowledge could change it a bit up or down. Price is subject to change without notice.

Features List:

1. 9 page turnkey custom website:
  - 6 SEO content pages
  - 1 Contact Form thank you page
  - 2 Newsletter opt-in pages
2. Personal coaching throughout all phases

3. Use of all CannonFire Marketing website development checklists and guides.
4. Expert keyword research
5. Marketing strategy including customized marketing funnel
6. Base site outline (based on keyword research and strategy)
7. The base content will be done by you (or a ghost writer). Content writing will follow the site outline prepared for you, and you will use the CannonFire Marketing Web Site Content Planning Guide.
8. Final SEO editing of the 6 content pages to ensure your content is properly optimized
9. Create and install 9 pages in proper HTML code.
10. Final site outline (usable for all future site growth)
11. Blog capability and set up
12. Newsletter system capability and set up
13. Auto responder capability and set up
14. Google Local submission with interactive map to your office.
15. RSS capability and set up
16. PDF creation from a base document you provide (i.e. special report, white paper, workbook etc.) to serve as the Free Resource download. 10 pages maximum. Includes light proofreading, formatting and editing, with final PDF creation and upload into SBI database.
17. Contact information in Footer of every page.
18. Site map submission to Google, MSN, Yahoo and Ask

19. Domain set up
20. SBI account set up
21. Email account set up
22. Use of any Standard Site Sell template
23. 2 hours instruction/coaching from Kelly on how to operate the site yourself and then if you need more at \$99.75 an hour.
24. Capable of adding pages on your own if desired or have a professional add pages... it is up to you. The Site Sell system is designed for non-techies with "what you see is what you get systems" (WYSIWYG) being used. This is what SBI calls their "block building" feature. The pages that CannonFire Marketing build for you will not be built in "blocks" however the block building feature will stay intact so if you choose to add pages yourself, you will be able to.
25. All SiteSell support systems...many, many...like user discussion groups on every topic related to technical and Internet marketing skill sets.
26. You own it and your control it. No ongoing fees.
27. Price does not include hosting at SBI.
28. Price does not include site graphics or pictures on pages.
29. The estimated cost of \$4600 is payable with 75% down to start, and the last 25% paid in full before training begins or getting the keys to the system and within 10 days of publishing. These terms must be followed or the site comes down and costs \$400 extra to re-install.

Further detailed Cannon Fire Marketing information can be found here:

[www.CannonFireMarketing.com](http://www.CannonFireMarketing.com) - Richard Cannon's site directed to service professionals.

A huge amount of great information with a marketing funnel that will be like what you will need.

[www.YourLegalPractice.com](http://www.YourLegalPractice.com) - Richard Cannon's site specifically for attorneys but it also has great information for therapists.

**Henry's quick and dirty assessment:** A good option. While costing more in the beginning this is likely to be a better option for the long term if budget is not the only or major consideration. They can provide more value and ROI in the long run I have reason to believe. How? More focus on your unique needs instead of more of a "fit you into our system" mode.

Richard is doing the keyword analysis and marketing strategy and he is extremely knowledgeable and experienced. The "marketing funnel" will be "custom" for your needs. They plan to teach you how to run the site yourself if you are on SiteSell and add pages yourself if you are so inclined. Thus you can "do your own" if you desire. If you don't want to do that they will charge \$99.75 per hour which is similar to the \$99 per hour at Site Sell Services.

They can be trusted to not "take you to the cleaners" and offer you up sells that won't add value and return on investment to your Internet marketing effort. Unless you have special needs they are going to host you on SiteSell and thus you will have access to everything that Site Sell Services will be giving you access to in that system. There will not be an ongoing payment of \$49 per month but you will pay the fee to Site Build It of \$299 per year to host your site. The system they are using is much, much superior to anything out there for the price that I know about so it is a very good Internet marketing system. Make no mistake about that fact.

**After the website is built I want to be able to make changes and add pages to the website myself or have my staff make changes to the site for me. Also I have a vendor telling me this is the way to go. Can I buy that type of website?**

This question is best answered by an article I wrote on the topic titled:

**CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WEBSITES –  
UPSIDES/DOWNSIDES**

Many firms (with or without their knowledge) have websites built with Content Management System (CMS) software. Why should you care?

While using a CMS has some advantages, most of them have some very serious downsides that could cost you more money in the end and put you at a major disadvantage with search engine rankings. So let's dive into the discussion.

First let me define what a “Content Management System” is for you. A CMS is software with an interface that enables a user (including non-technical users like you or your staff if the vendor allows you that access) to add, subtract, or change content on a website. A CMS stores text, images, graphics, etc. in the system so that content can be delivered to one or more pages on your website. The CMS enables the user to write and publish online without having to write HTML code (the computer language of the web). CMS software can be extremely complex or reasonably simple to use. A CMS can be bought off the shelf, downloaded for free, or be accessed online through hosted services. If you want to learn more details on defining a CMS system go to Google and put in “define: content management system” and up will come tons of definitions.

If you go the CMS route via a vendor who is building your site you must be extremely careful to select the right CMS since there are so many of them out in the market. Additionally if your site is currently running a CMS (or you are considering a vendor using or telling you it is good to use a CMS system) you need to ask plenty of penetrating questions that we will list below. The advantages you are likely to hear is that you will be able to change, add, or take off content from the site for yourself. While that is true you shall see the “rest of the story” as we move forward.

**Let’s start with the advantages of a website running a CMS.** To keep it simple let me list them:

1. You will have the ability to modify the content of your website without web design (HTML) knowledge. In some cases you’ll also have the ability to add/remove pages to your site. This saves you from tracking down and wait for your web developer.
2. Large websites with many pages and sections can stay better organized and have better control over their website with a CMS. That said, even a small site can take advantage of a CMS.
3. Website vendors often sell inexpensive websites (simple websites rather than Internet marketing websites) and advertise the ability to modify content through a CMS.
4. If you are a vendor like Martindale-Hubbell or FindLaw building thousands or even tens of thousands of websites for many different firms you would use a CMS to do it quickly and cheaply.
5. If the search engine optimization (SEO) is done correctly and the CMS selected is implemented well, the chances for cost savings for the firm are likely both in the short run and the long run.

6. Many CMS systems are expandable, allowing you to have a fairly static website for starters, but can easily add on features such as blogs, RSS feeds, calendars, clients-only areas, site search, video players, audio players, slideshows and more with relative ease.
7. Easy growth. One of the hardest things to maintain on a non CMS website are the menus and links. With a CMS, these elements are often updated automatically as you expand and edit the website.

**Let's discuss the disadvantages of using a CMS.** Again I will list them for you.

1. Most CMS unfortunately will not allow you to customize the URL structure for each page and this is a major disadvantage and cost you plenty in lost revenue. An example of a search engine friendly URL looks like this:

<http://www.yourwebsite.com/personal-injury-attorneys/florida/john-smith/>

The URL below is an example of an URL that is not search engine friendly and will cost you in the rankings:

<http://www.yourwebsite.com/index.asp&contentid=2345>

Three CMSs that can allow you to customize the URL structure if your vendor knows SEO standards and will do it are WordPress, Expression Engine and Joomla. If your CMS won't allow the following (at a minimum) you will have SEO problems and thus lower rankings at search engines:

- keyword-filled URLs for each page or post
- unique title tags on each page/post
- unique meta/description tags on each page/post
- H1, H2, etc. heading tags for keywords

8. Some CMS unfortunately are not friendly for Google to crawl the site with their robots so they can't index the site. This is an obvious problem for search engine rankings and will cost you plenty if you have a CMS that is not search engine friendly. That said some CMS systems will enhance the process by dynamically creating Google or Yahoo site maps on the fly so the emphasis on this point is the word "some" in this disadvantage.
9. The vendor selling you the website will be telling you that you can update, add, and subtract pages for yourself on your website using their CMS. This assertion is probably very true. What they may not tell you is that it is not likely (unless you know how to follow SEO standards) you will be able to write pages that will rank well at the search

engines even with an SEO-friendly CMS. Additionally, do know that making changes on a website will not be as easy as writing a Word document on your computer. You or your team will need to be trained on how to use the interface the CMS software uses.

10. If you are using a CMS that is on another server (referred to as “hosted CMS” in the business) and is not your software then you will be required to upgrade your site when the vendor updates the software that is used on that system your website is on. This may involve fees to you and may require that you change things on your website that don’t work on the newer updated software and may require training for you or your team so you can use the upgraded software.
11. If you have a CMS for your website and decide to change where your website "lives", for instance you are changing hosting companies; it may not be a simple process. Unless you are using a "hosted CMS" solution then you will need to move the website files, database and configuration options; this can be tricky. With a "hosted CMS" you simply need to provide your new login credentials so that it knows where to publish your files.
12. Unless you have free CMS software, you might have to pay the costs of upgrades and security patches. All CMS packages (except hosted CMS) do require periodic security updates and while it may be an easy process for a webmaster/designer/host to make these upgrades or security patches it is typically a bigger technical process than a law firm would want to take on.
13. Vendors will often try to sell inexpensive websites that use premade templates rather than custom-made designs or marketing funnels. This can negatively affect your firm’s image and marketing funnel and thus conversion results from visitors to clients.
14. Some types of CMS software will require premium hosting services so you can’t put them on a “budget” hosting plan. Here we have the “some” situation again. Typically CMS will require a MySQL database and PHP which even the most basic hosting plans have included these days and it is something to be aware of in selecting a system.
15. If you decided to change vendors after setting up a CMS-powered website, you have to find someone who knows that particular CMS software. This can limit your options to the point where you feel like you have been kidnapped or are being held hostage by the current vendor. This is why it’s important to use a CMS that has a large and established user base. I am very sure about the widespread availability of professionals building with WordPress and Joomla for instance and I don’t see much problem with Expression Engine. I will be talking more about these in the conclusions of the article. In all fairness it should be noted that you can get in a “kidnapped” or “hostage” situation with a HTML static site vendor as well.

16. Some vendors, especially hosted CMS vendors, use a proprietary CMS system that is only available from them, fixable by them, and operable by them. In a worst-case-scenario much of the functionality you think you might have as part of your website could be eliminated if they go out of business or if you terminate your relationship with them.

## **Conclusions**

Clearly I would not rule out CMS systems totally as they do offer many advantages. You must be careful, however, to pick the right CMS and have it implemented properly by your vendor especially if SEO that enables good search engine rankings are important to you. From my experience, research and talking to two different CMS experts I have confidence in, I can say that WordPress, Expression Engine and Joomla can do the SEO you need if the vendor knows SEO techniques and follows good SEO techniques. Unfortunately choosing a proper CMS and having it setup correctly is very technical, so find someone you can trust that knows the subject well.

Additionally, I would not want you to think that the ability to make changes and add/subtract pages on your own is going to be like writing a document in your word processing software. It is going to take more knowledge and will require more training to make changes on your own than you think it will be, and probably harder than some vendors will acknowledge. It will be easier with say WordPress, Joomla and probably Expression Engine than many, many others. Even if a CMS is setup to be SEO friendly, the content that you write must be written with SEO in mind for your website to be effective for SEO. Do consider that if a staff person is primarily doing this task when they leave the firm you have to transfer that knowledge. If you are not going to be updating or adding to your website frequently then going with a static HTML website could be easier to maintain and maybe cheaper to host (especially if there is a licensing cost to your CMS). I would recommend you have conversations with someone who is an expert third party with no financial interest in your decision to help you make the final choice.

One other caution, hosted CMS systems are probably systems better avoided. Unless they contain all of the functionality that you could ever want it is very easy to out-grow them and very difficult to do custom functions. Unfortunately this isn't totally obvious to the lay person, but with a hosted CMS, the database is on the hosted system. So when it comes time to publish, it actually publishes straight up flat html files. So if you want to install something like a WordPress blog, or a calendar, or some other nifty piece of software that should integrate with the website it's very hard to maintain that installation because there are no common shared elements, like the navigation for instance. Also, you're at the mercy of the provider. If they raise rates, go out of business, etc. you're out of luck. Given this information I would suggest avoiding hosted CMS.

Well a lot to consider. Want to learn more? The website <http://www.cmsmatrix.org/> provides a comparison tool that allows you to compare the features of up to 10 CMS

systems at a time. They have reviews and feature reports of 990 CMS software packages including open source, commercial and hosted solutions. It's a good place to fact check what a vendor may be saying.

The website <http://www.opensourcecms.com/> provides live demos of almost every active open source CMS system and allows users to try out both the front end and back end of the system. Additionally, many commercial and hosted packages offer online demos.

### **OK, is there anything else I should know about CMS type sites?**

Yes, one last thing. Do find out now if your current website is a CMS type site. Your vendor may not have told you your site is constructed with CMS. If your site is CMS then find out what type of CMS. If it is not WordPress, Expression Engine or Joomla then you are likely to have a problem at least with SEO. The vendor may tell you that what you need is search engine optimization and want to sell you that service. I would not do that with them unless the site was WordPress, Expression Engine or Joomla or you had an unbiased third party assess the CMS you have currently. You may be faced with changing vendors and building a new site using another type of CMS or even a non-CMS site if you hope to be competitive with search engines.

### **Shouldn't the vendor I select have built lawyer websites before?**

No. In fact some of these types of vendors that tell you how dozens, hundreds or thousands of lawyers have bought websites from them are probably the most expensive options in the marketplace with not nearly as much value delivered compared to what you can get from other vendors at a lower price. Remember that some of those "high end" vendors have high-end overhead, stockholders, and come complete with sales reps that come to visit you in person even. That is all heavy overhead. I have also found they want to sell you "marketing packages" that are pricy which usually include marketing on their heavily trafficked sites where they will list you with a group of your close competitors for the visitor to select from. I don't know about you, however, I want my prospective clients to come directly to me from the search engine. I want them to fall in love with me and not look at my competitors and hope they pick me out of the group on these sites. So I will spend my money getting the folks directly to my CTPM with Middleton marketing funnel site thank you very much. Also remember the competition on the Internet is all about keywords and has little to nothing to do with if you are doctors, lawyers, plumbers, or roofers. Keywords are keywords, content is content and all of the other issues I wrote about are the same in Internet marketing.

What should you look out for in a vendor? Do they understand keyword research? Do they have a marketing funnel in mind and if so what is it? Does the company have a good PageRank on their own website? Alexa rank? How well in SERPs are their sites doing? Have I gotten 3 bids from vendors and compared apples to apples?

Having said all of the above if you think you need a vendor who has done a lot of lawyer sites I have found some vendors that are probably at the mid to higher end of the price range that have done a lot of lawyer sites and have done them pretty well to very well in my opinion. These companies are not of the types I spoke about at the very beginning which are parts of major corporations with stockholders and sales reps etc. You do need to be thinking a budget of \$20,000 to \$30,000 minimum out of the gate in building a website with them and monthly fees for SEO work that, while not excessive, they will be hefty with this “class” of vendor. They all have a very robust websites with good rankings. In this group the first one to consider is ConsultWebs.com at [www.consultwebs.com](http://www.consultwebs.com). They are “video savvy” as it were and I have heard unsolicited endorsements of them from lawyers I have talked with. I also think this vendor is a pretty good bet <http://www.fosterwebmarketing.com>. Another good option that is skillful and video savvy is [www.EinsteinLaw.com](http://www.EinsteinLaw.com).

I have researched another decent option which is [www.Page1Solutions.com](http://www.Page1Solutions.com). This firm is strong in video use and offers a reasonable fee for their class at \$22,500 which includes the video. Their SEO offering includes a guarantee. Their guarantee is to have you on the first page of 250 search engines or you don’t pay them (now they don’t guarantee you will be on the first page of Google mind you – about 70% of the searches are made on Google - or any particular search engine like Yahoo, MSN, or ASK – about another 15 or 20% of the searches - although you may be on some of these with a first page listing for one or more of your pages). The fee is not totally unreasonable for SEO although it is not inexpensive running from \$925 to \$3200 per month depending on the market you are in, however if your average file value is in this range it could be worth it only if they can get you on the first page of Google, Yahoo or MSN in my thinking. It might be worth it particularly for PI firms in competitive markets. That said there are vendors who could do the SEO job for you at a much lower fee and get similar results or even as good or better results without charging a monthly fee so I am less than totally convinced this is a good option with them.

One last word on SEO guarantees. In general any vendor guaranteeing you results in SEO is likely not a reputable SEO firm or they are promising you something that is fairly easy to hit by any SEO vendor so don’t be swayed by SEO guarantees. With the firm I talked about above the firm’s benchmarks for the guarantee are obtainable in my judgment. Their guarantee in this instance does not indicate a scam SEO firm but they do have an easy target to hit. Thus their guarantee may seem impressive but can be hit by most any decent SEO vendor. Thus the guarantee impresses the uneducated SEO purchaser inducing them to hire the firm as opposed to providing any unique value in the guarantee itself. While not all guarantees are a scam I would not be impressed by a guarantee unless it included being on the first page of Google, Yahoo, MSN or ASK for your high traffic keywords and a vendor who promises that is likely a scam. Finally, know being on the first page of anything but Google is not enough traffic to get you a lot of business but better than nothing so really Google is the goal in SEO.

### **You keep talking about the number of pages on the site. Why is that important?**

One of the reasons I tell you that you need at least 20 keywords to write 20 content pages to is because it is believed Google considers 20 to 80 pages or so to be a medium size site. One of the major factors Google uses to determine page ranking is the total number of pages on the site. Most attorneys have small sites (less than 20 pages of content – usually way less). You will be out in front of the pack if you have a medium size site. Also, you want to have as part of your ongoing marketing plan of your site to add a minimum of one new page per month to your site. Why? Because over time you would be adding 12 pages per year which will push you up the rankings each month and one day you will have a large size site which will make you virtually unassailable you your competitors. These new pages will be written using the keyword research so you rank high for these small traffic sites. Finally, if you have selected your domain names correctly you will have a salable asset worth a large amount of money since it will be a mighty marketing machine for you by then.

### **You just said, “...selected you domain name correctly...” Is YourLawFirm’sNameLaw.com a good domain name?**

Sorry to say no. Most lawyers have poor domain names on several counts. Your domain name does affect your page ranking to some extent. First the name does not include one of your main keywords, which is the ideal or at least the domain name describes what you do. Second, using the name of the firm is often not a salable brand. Third it does not fit the psychographics of most prospective clients. Fourth often it is not easily memorable and often difficult to spell - if you can remember the name. In fact, some attorneys don’t even own the domain name they do have since the vendor registered it they may own it. Your keyword research can help you select a good domain name.

### **Is there anything else of an intellectual property nature I need to be aware of in this Internet marketing process?**

Yes. First be sure that you indeed own the copyright to the entire website including the content, code, graphics, text and photographs that created the website. It is all yours. If not then I would not go with that vendor. Also be sure the vendor warrants that it owns or has all permissions to use any copyrighted material that they use in building the website. Also if the vendor is hosting your website be sure they have in place in the agreement what they are to do should the hosting equipment go down (like transfer your site to another server) and what are the remedies for interruption of service for more than short periods of time (short meaning hours at the most). Frequent loss of service should enable you to leave that service with no penalties. Some of the attorneys I have coached have said they had to buy their own website again when they wanted to move. A no fun situation as you can imagine - don’t let that happen to you.

## **You mentioned “marketing packages”. How much should I be spending on Internet marketing once the website is up?**

This is an “it depends” question. It depends on your particular market place (are you in Peoria or Manhattan), your competitors (your keyword competitors I mean) and how fast you want to see results (slow build of traffic or faster build of traffic). I can say this definitely – don’t build an Internet marketing website unless you are prepared to market it at some decent monthly level right out of the gate. Let’s move on to the “it depends” part a bit more in depth. If you want fast results out of the gate then you need to do Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising.

PPC is a unique skill set in itself - people do this exclusively as a profession so it can get complex. That said being that complex is unlikely to be the case for a solo or small firm particularly in a less than major market (major being Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, etc.). If you are in a medium to small market you can handle this I am relatively sure on your own with maybe a little coaching since once you set it up you can leave it alone for weeks or even months before tweaking it. Your keyword research tells you what keywords you will be bidding on. You can read a couple of books on the subject from Amazon.com and read all about it at Google, MSN, Yahoo and ASK that all have sections of their site to explain how PPC works on their site. You can begin ads at the either MSN, Yahoo or ASK.com to get an idea of what you are dealing with first since if you make mistakes there you won’t lose much money like you can on Google. Google has almost half of the traffic on the Internet so you want to be on Google but go to the minor leagues first is my advice then go to Google. You can learn how to do this yourself or give it to a trusted assistant to master. The only proviso is if you are billing over \$100 per hour your time is better spent doing billable hours or better still managing other aspect of the marketing process since you almost certainly can farm this task out to someone with expertise for \$100 per hour or less. You can get coaching on how to do PPC on your own or total PPC services via Cannon Fire Marketing at [www.CannonFireMarketing.com](http://www.CannonFireMarketing.com).

Another option for PPC is to locate a Google Advertising Professional who have been vetted by Google (for the program requirements go here: <https://adwords.google.com/select/ProfessionalWelcome>) although Google itself does not list them but does have pages that the certified person can link to from their website so you can verify their qualification. I have found a site here <http://www.whoisagap.com/> that has over 1600 of them listed so you could use this as a method for selecting a PPC vendor. While this credential is more assurance the person you are dealing with is reputable and has the necessary skills it is no guarantee of course. Also you will probably pay more for someone with this qualification than a non-certified person who may be able to do the job as well or even better.

Now indeed there is more to marketing a site than doing PPC ads. You will need someone to submit your site to secondary search engines/directories with Google Page Ranks over 4 although as of October 2008 Google removed this recommendation from it’s Webmaster

Guidelines section indicating they have devalued these links in their algorithm for ranking a site. Never, ever buy a software package that promises to submit you to hundreds or thousands of secondary/directory search engines. They don't work and in fact can get you penalized. You will want to write articles and submit those to high page rank article sites - again for the high quality links. Lastly, you will want to put out press releases at press release sites as well for the quality links. Bottom line never, ever buy links. A few months before I wrote this document Google "punished" sites with purchased links by dropping their PageRank as much as 3 ranks - ouch.

Also, do not get into reciprocal link plans since this also can be the kiss of death for your site from search engines. So there is more you can do to market your site that would cost some time and/or money. It all depends on how fast you want to build is my take. Overall you need to take a long-term view and build consistently, persistently over time and you will reap the rewards. Once you have built your PageRank you can cut back or stop all of your PPC ads. Think like a manager and entrepreneur here since a website is an investment that will produce a return on that investment if you do it well over time plus pay you again when you sell it like a house is sold at a profit. I will write in much more detail on specific online marketing strategies in the section below.

### **What are some other ways to market a website once it is up?**

Here is where the rubber meets the road. To simplify things I will briefly list some of the major ways below:

SEO Is The Key Issue = If you don't begin with keywords in the beginning and build appropriately from that point forward you are going to have to start the process from the beginning most likely. Sometimes it is better to throw it all away and start over. Sometimes you can use parts of what you have and sometimes a lot of what you have in place now. The analogy is you have a road in need a repair. Sometimes the road is in such bad repair they have to strip up the road and work on the road bed itself and put in new road. Other times they just strip off the top layer of asphalt and lay down a new layer of asphalt. Always you are going to need to run your keyword research first and then decide from there what needs to be done next.

Competitive Intelligence = This process is related to keywords since we are talking about using your keywords to determine what your competitors are doing online and elsewhere. This process begins with Google Alerts here: <http://www.google.com/alerts>. Let me have Google tell it with a direct quote from this page:

"Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic.

Some handy uses of Google Alerts include:

- monitoring a developing news story
- keeping current on a competitor or industry
- getting the latest on a celebrity or event
- keeping tabs on your favorite sports teams”

Once you know your keywords you can place Google Alerts for your major keywords to monitor what your competitors are doing and track if your efforts are yielding fruits. This process also gives you ideas of what you need to do that is successful for competitors or those in other market areas that are being successful that can be applied in your market. You would also want to place alerts for your name, your firm’s name and the names of your key competitors in your local market. Trust me; you will learn a lot of things from this process.

Secondary Search Engines = The biggest thing to know about any link anywhere is never pay for a link from anyone’s site although paying for a secondary search engine to review your site and decide if they would index it or not has not, up to this writing, been considered buying links. Again at this writing in October 2008 Google deleted from it’s guidelines for Webmasters that one should submit their sites to secondary search engines. Thus the current thinking is these types of links are of much less value if not little to no value as a result in getting good rankings at Google. The next biggest thing to know in this category is never hire a company or buy some software that says they will submit your site to hundreds or thousands of search engines. This can get you in trouble and just does not work anyway.

Legal Directories = Here we are talking about places like FindLaw.com, Lawyers.com, Justia.com, InjuryBoard.com, etc. They go on and on with a host of little players. The big problem with any directory is everyone is on them. Your name comes up with all your competitors. Also those listings can cost you dearly. Not only that they want to sell you a website, SEO, a blog, special listings at the head of the pack and on and on. You are not likely to get a return on your investment using this strategy. It is better to invest that money in your own Internet marketing that drives traffic to your own site where the visitor sees only you. That said if you do use one of these directories only sign up for one year at most and see if it does produce you any cases. If it does and you make money on the cost then buy another period. The moral of the story is track them carefully if you use them and this is not a great tactic.

Ethical Bribes = here I am talking about newsletters, white papers, first few chapters of your book, and eBook, free consultations, self tests, free teleclasses, etc. Anything that you can offer to your visitors that enrolls them into giving you permission to market to them via their first name and email address.

Press Releases = one of the best ways to gain one way links and get traffic to your site is via press releases sent online. You want to be sure and have your press release be keyword optimized and do consider having a copywriter at least edit the release. I recommend using

the paid option which is about \$120 at <http://www.prweb.com/sharenews.php> since most small to medium size

businesses find this to be the best option overall – best result for the lowest fee. If you want to get into more options that have basic free services or low cost expanded options from \$20 to \$200 look here:

- [www.i-newswire.com](http://www.i-newswire.com)

- [www.pressbox.co.uk](http://www.pressbox.co.uk)

- [www.pr.com](http://www.pr.com)

- [www.prleap.com](http://www.prleap.com)

- [www.prlog.com](http://www.prlog.com)

- [www.prweb.com](http://www.prweb.com)

- [www.theopenpress.com](http://www.theopenpress.com)

- [www.24-7pressrelease.com](http://www.24-7pressrelease.com)

These listed below are more expensive with even more options and usually are used by bigger corporations. PRNewswire is probably the leader in this class. For most law practices I don't see a need to use these options and here they are:

- [www.businesswire.com](http://www.businesswire.com)

- [www.ereleases.com](http://www.ereleases.com)

- [www.eworldwire.com](http://www.eworldwire.com)

- [www.internetnewsbureau.com](http://www.internetnewsbureau.com)

- [www.marketwire.com](http://www.marketwire.com)

- [www.massmediadistribution.com](http://www.massmediadistribution.com)

- [www.pressrelease365.com](http://www.pressrelease365.com)
- [www.prnewswire.com](http://www.prnewswire.com)
- [www.send2press.com](http://www.send2press.com)
- [www.urlwire.com](http://www.urlwire.com)
- [www.xpresspress.com](http://www.xpresspress.com)

Article Marketing = there are many, many sites on the Internet known as article sites. You can write articles and place them on those sites for their visitors to

read. Additionally other people looking for good content for their website can publish the article to their website as long as they place a link to your site with the article “tag” on the bottom. Some of these sites will also distribute them to other websites and blogs for you as well. You only want to publish your articles to article sites with a Google PageRank of 4 or better. Lower than that and it is not worth the trouble. Here are a few of my favorites:

[www.EzineArticles.com](http://www.EzineArticles.com)

[www.ArticleDashboard.com](http://www.ArticleDashboard.com)

[www.IdeaMarketers.com](http://www.IdeaMarketers.com)

[www.Buzzle.com](http://www.Buzzle.com)

Ezine Marketing = this strategy involves getting your articles published in ezines that target your market. You also could place ads in these ezines as well. Below are the top three sites I received on Google when I searched ezine directory...there are many more.

[www.ezine-dir.com](http://www.ezine-dir.com)

[www.ezinelisting.com](http://www.ezinelisting.com)

<http://subs.zinester.com>

If you want to learn more about this area that also offers article distribution services (really reasonable at \$20 each if you buy a block of 10) go here:

<http://www.thephantomwriters.com/>

<http://thephantomwriters.com/x.pl/tpw/info/article-distribution/index.html>

<http://thephantomwriters.com/ebooks/article-marketing-traffic.html>

ASK Campaigns = this system creates a marketing funnel simply by asking questions. You simply ask your visitors, clients and subscribers what they want, it is a powerful tool...in fact, Socrates was one of the first to point out that asking what your client thinks is the best way for you to learn how to satisfy those desires. There is specialized software to help build these marketing systems. The

ASK system actually sorts out the keywords people input so you know right away what your clients want most from you. Also you can more easily build your newsletter list using this method. Some of the biggest names in the USA have been using ASK campaigns in many ways. Here are a couple for you to check out...go ahead and ask them a question so you can see how the whole process works.

[www.AskStephenCovey.com](http://www.AskStephenCovey.com)

Name-Squeeze Pages = This strategy is one that can be used with just a single page or as a page on your website. Generally the one single page strategy is where you see this strategy used the most. The sole purpose of the page is to get the name and email address of the visitor. The ethical bribe (see above) has to be good enough to get the visitor to give up the information and give you permission to market to them. Sometimes the name-squeeze page is used as an entry way into a website...no name/email then you don't get in. This strategy is usually used with very content rich sites. They are also very effective as the first step in any sales cycle since the person is "raising their hand" saying they are a much warmer prospect. Name-squeeze pages get double digit conversion rates of visitors to names submitted while regular pages get about 1 or 2 percent. A well done name-squeeze page to the right targets with the right offer can get way over 50%. So they are very effective.

Audio/Video Usage = I am going to at least introduce the topic of audio and video here. Let's get going with audio first. Why would you want audio on your site? Let me list the ways:

1. First and foremost it lets your visitor hear you and know you at a deeper level than just what copy with a picture on a site can convey. Audio impacts the visitor at a whole new and a much deeper level. Also let's dwell on the "heard you" part since hearing involves more of the brain it embeds your message deeper into the mind of your prospect with more chance of retention than any copywriting on the page could do alone. Audio makes you more memorable.
2. Some visitors prefer to listen to audio over reading. After all a computer screen can be a tough read and who has time to read everything on a website anyway. Additionally,

you can even set your audio to turn on automatically when a visitor hits the page which can be a big plus. Do remember some visitors don't read all the copy but only scan the headlines and bold copy. If the audio is running while they scan so much the better. Some will multitask on something else while they listen to your audio but at least they are listening when they probably would not have been reading.

3. By doing an audio you are delivering a consistent message to your visitor that enables you to know what they have heard before they have contacted you. A key success ingredient in conversion later.
4. Successful businesses have personalities and this is true with attorney marketing. Using audio brings that personality forward in ways the written word cannot. Competition is fierce and will get even more competitive moving forward. You will be differentiating yourself from other attorneys by having audio on your site. Since being someone's attorney is very personal it is important that they hear you personally so they have a more personal sense of who you are.
  - As you get deeper into lawyer marketing online you will probably be doing social media sites and many of those enable you to post audio to the site. A nice advantage in that arena.
  - You will have the ability to place audio on podcasting sites as well.

Let's move on to video in marketing online by saying everything you just read above multiplied exponentially applies to video online. If you want some examples of great, good, awful and folksy online video by attorneys go here:

<http://www.edgelawfirm.com/selecting.an.attorney/our.philosophy>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZEyD1SDMQY>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVG1Wc2fEas&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ebcLpwAeLk&feature=related>

<http://www.torys.com/VideoCenter/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9dMjPgj5QA>

[http://www.foley.com/multimedia/multimedia\\_results.aspx?mode=viewall](http://www.foley.com/multimedia/multimedia_results.aspx?mode=viewall)

<http://www.personalinjuryfyi.com/video.html>

[http://www.mrdui.com/virtualtournew\\_part1.html](http://www.mrdui.com/virtualtournew_part1.html)

<http://www.atlanta-bankruptcy-attorney.com>

Now the last fellow in the list is a bankruptcy attorney. He knows how to do a better video but decided to leave it alone as is. Why? Because it is working gangbusters for him. How do I know? Because one of the video specialists I learn from knows him, is his neighbor and asked him if he wanted to do an improved video at no cost and he said no way...sort of said it ain't broke so let's not try to fix it. By the way, he is #1 in Atlanta for "Atlanta bankruptcy lawyer" on Google and has a lot of nice content. His site could be better of course, however, he is not working with me he says smiling. Also, I would not recommend you have such low production values in your video as this fellow or as poor a delivery. That said it is hard to argue with success. The key in any video is it creates a sense of "know, like, trust, relationship and credibility" in the viewer. You need to come across as approachable, warm, caring, not too professional but not too casual and look the camera "in the eye" as if the visitor was in front of you live since you are personally talking to your visitor as if they were actually with you. You are trying to connect with your visitor on an emotional, unconscious or pre-conscious level with the video for the most part and not on a logical or reasonable level. First they need to "buy you the person" and only later "buy you the lawyer" is the way to think about it. You will need to work on a script and keep the video below 2 minutes at the most. You should be able to find a vendor in your city to do the video for under \$1,000 and maybe well under \$1,000. Perhaps even a student in college program or vocational school can do the job since this is not rocket science.

If you want to really get into it then go to YouTube.com and search under any practice area you desire and see what you see. My hat is off to even the bad ones as they are using video early and they will learn. The quick and dirty here is the web is going video. You and I need to have video on our websites. End of story. You may not want to skip using audio in some ways and put the emphasis now on going to video. Lastly just for fun go to [www.WebOuts.com](http://www.WebOuts.com) and take a look at their videos.

Why do I say that lawyer marketing online requires video? Where is the evidence? Well, if you want the bottom line it is in research completed by the well respected Pew Foundation titled "Online Video". This study found, among other things, that "57% of Internet users have watched videos online, and most of them share what they find with others". I do and I am 61 years old. Interestingly

the study also found that viewers younger than 29 preferred amateur videos although overall 60% of the viewers preferred professionally produced videos. If you want a copy of the Pew report with all the details go here:

[http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_Online\\_Video\\_2007.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Online_Video_2007.pdf)

What other evidence? Well, while I don't recommend FindLaw for many reasons here is what they found:

“Video grabs visitors' attention and drives them to act. According to our studies, consumers visit an average of 4.8 Web sites before choosing a lawyer online. That drops to 1.8 sites when the site contains a video.”

There will be an expectation soon on the part of your website visitors to see a video when they come to your site. If you don't have a video they will wonder why you don't have a video. Today people would wonder why you don't have a website. In the not too distant past they wondered why you did not have an email address. This is what is coming. Video in marketing online is an imperative. Besides that, video is probably one of the most effective methods for getting your visitor's attention, keeping that attention and converting them to a paying client. It is not the whole story but it is a major part of the conversion puzzle and will only become more so in the future. You want to be at the front of this change online.

Social Networking Sites = This strategy involves a considerable amount of time so it is not one to take on lightly. It is a bit like joining a service club. Don't join if you don't intend to participate and have a passion for the vision of the community. You will need to spend regular time working the network on the site. Also, it depends on your practice area what site might be good for you. These sites usually have systems for chat, voice chat, messaging, email, posting, blogging, video, discussion groups etc. with other members. Business to business practice areas I would go to these:

[www.Linkedin.com](http://www.Linkedin.com) (biggest by far)

[www.networkingforprofessionals.com](http://www.networkingforprofessionals.com)

[www.moli.com](http://www.moli.com)

[www.perfectbusiness.com](http://www.perfectbusiness.com)

Business to consumer I would go look here:

[www.FaceBook.com](http://www.FaceBook.com)

[www.MySpace.com](http://www.MySpace.com)

[www.Friendster.com](http://www.Friendster.com)

You can read some books to help you get started if you like:

I'm on LinkedIn - Now What? by Jason Alba

LinkedIn Personal Trainer by Steven Tylock

I'm on Facebook - Now What? by Jason Alba, Jesse Stay

These are short books and should be helpful to you.

List Serves or Discussion Groups = This strategy is about joining a discussion group on topics related to your practice area. You would then participate in the group. Use good etiquette and do not overtly recruit clients but do have a robust signature line on each of your posts that includes your website link and maybe a discrete offer or “ethical bribe” in your slogan. Here is where you can find groups or even create your own that you run:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/>

<http://groups.google.com/grphp?hl=en&tab=wg>

Classified Ads = this strategy is not one to dismiss totally. Online classifieds is one of the fastest growing parts of the web. In 2006 a study done by ComScore found 22% of web users now visit online classified sites. Craigslist is the king of the hill in this arena. Now granted a lot of these are for selling products like autos like AutoTrader.com or personals and we won't go there in this document. That said plenty of classifieds have services listed as well. Like Oodle.com for instance. You would probably want to look locally if that is your market for your local paper's classified section. Nationally that is a different story. Also, don't think this is “low brow” traffic. Research has found that classifieds attract a higher than proportion of young folks (25 to 35) and high-income users. Folks on the west coast of the USA were higher users than the rest of the USA. So don't rule this out totally. Here are a couple of links:

[www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com)

[www.oodle.com](http://www.oodle.com)

Community Sites = If you are in a small market there is usually some site or sites that all the community goes to for all kinds of things. Can you write a column or articles for that site? Join a discussion group on that site? Place an ad on that site that encourages a click through to your ethical bribe name squeeze page? Even in a large market you will find these types of sites.

PPC = I wrote on this topic earlier in the document. In case you missed it here it is again.

PPC is a unique skill set in itself - people do this exclusively as a profession so it can get complex. That said being that complex is unlikely to be the case for a solo or small firm particularly in a less than major market (major being Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, etc.). If you are in a medium to small market you can handle this I am relatively sure on your own with maybe a little coaching since once you set it up you can leave it alone for weeks or even months before tweaking it. Your keyword research tells you what keywords you will be bidding on. You can read a couple of books on the subject from Amazon.com and read all about it at Google, MSN, Yahoo and ASK that all have sections of their site to explain how PPC works on their site. You can begin ads at the either MSN,

Yahoo or ASK.com to get an idea of what you are dealing with first since if you make mistakes there you won't lose much money like you can on Google. Google has almost half of the traffic on the Internet so you want to be on Google but go to the minor leagues first is my advice then go to Google. You can learn how to do this yourself or give it to a trusted assistant to master. The only proviso is if you are billing over \$100 per hour your time is better spent doing billable hours or better still managing other aspect of the marketing process since you almost certainly can farm this task out to someone with expertise for \$100 per hour or less. You can get coaching on how to do PPC on your own to total PPC services via Cannon Fire Marketing at [www.CannonFireMarketing.com](http://www.CannonFireMarketing.com).

Another option is to locate a Google Advertising Professional who have been vetted by Google (for the program requirements go here: <https://adwords.google.com/select/ProfessionalWelcome>) although Google itself does not list them but does have pages that the certified person can link to from their website so you can verify their qualification. I have found a site here <http://www.whoisagap.com/> that has over 1600 of them listed so you could use this as a method for selecting a PPC vendor. While this credential is more assurance the person you are dealing with is reputable and has the necessary skills it is no guarantee of course. Also you probably will pay more for someone with this qualification than a non-certified person who may be able to do the job as well or better.

Client Matching Sites = I have written extensively on this strategy in articles posted online and in my newsletter here in 2006:

[www.law-firm-marketing-coach.com/Law\\_Firm\\_Marketing\\_Solutions-newsletter-002.html](http://www.law-firm-marketing-coach.com/Law_Firm_Marketing_Solutions-newsletter-002.html)

with an update in 2008 here:

[http://www.law-firm-marketing-coach.com/Law\\_Firm\\_Marketing\\_Solutions-newsletter-28.html](http://www.law-firm-marketing-coach.com/Law_Firm_Marketing_Solutions-newsletter-28.html)

Bottom line, it is worth considering. Internet marketing takes time to get new clients online. This strategy can get you clients tomorrow via online efforts of the major players in this arena. I have a lot of "provisos" in making the recommendation to give it a try so be sure to read this edition of the newsletter to determine if this is indeed a strategy you want to give a try.

Local Listings For Google Local and Yahoo = do be sure your website is listed in Google's Local Business Center, <https://www.google.com/local/add/> and Yahoo's Local Listings, <http://listings.local.yahoo.com/> (there is no charge for these listings).

**You said something about "...tell you that you also need a blog with your website".  
What is a blog and do I need a blog?**

A blog is defined by wikipedia.com as:

“A **weblog**, which is usually shortened to **blog**, is a website where regular entries are made (such as in a journal or diary) and presented in reverse chronological order. Blogs often offer commentary or news on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries.”

The ABA reports there are 70,000 new blogs posted online each day and that about 6% of lawyers have a blog. They do have advantages of course. They are cheap to build with little tech skills needed to write to a blog. They are even free or low fee to host. Free is available at blogger.com and a fee site is available at typepad.com for \$5 to \$15 per month – I don't recommend either option. If you are going to have a blog you need to own the domain name, get a host and get blogging software via WordPress.org. It is possible to have a blog and not have a website and I don't recommend it for most people. Now that may be changing somewhat as there is now a new animal called a Blogsite.

From an Internet marketing perspective most blogs *on a separate domain name* from your website do not provide that much of a benefit in support of a website (the main support is having a link from your blog to your website – also you would not want a link from your blog to your website if the blog had a lower page rank than your website anyway) and they do not replace a website. Additionally, if you are going to have a blog that has high page rank be prepared to write something of quality to it at least 2 or 3 times per week. Yes, per week. Blogging experts say you should expect to spend 2 to 4 hours per week on writing for the blog. I don't think this is marketing time well spent for most lawyers. You could do much better building your referral network with this time. Thus my answer is “no” to the blog idea unless you are in a larger firm where several attorneys are dividing the writing duties or you have associates who are good at this type of writing work and have no other way to contribute to the marketing process or even better still some talented paralegals who could do the major blog writing ghosting for you that you add the finishing touches.

Now, on having a blog *attached to your current domain name* that is not necessarily such a bad idea. I would not have said that a couple of years ago. Maybe not even one year ago. Now given the link building possibilities of a blog attached to a current domain name and the new content added frequently then attaching a blog to a website makes more sense from a search engine ranking perspective. Here is an example of this type:

<http://blog.hubspot.com/>

You will need to buy some books on blogging for business purposes to learn more about what is required in a successful business blog which I am sure you can find on Amazon.com if you decide this option is indeed for you. Additionally, blogs have more issues from an ethical perspective so do check your state bar rules. Finally, you might want to check out [www.blawg.org](http://www.blawg.org). No I did not misspell “blog” I intended “blawg” that is

a way of putting “law” inside “blog” to designate blogs that focus on lawyers and legal issues. This site is a “search engine” for blawgs and legal sites of all types. You could also check out <http://www.blawgrepublic.com> as well. If you are writing the blog/blawg for other lawyers then you certainly want to be listed on “blawg” sites.

### **What is the business about “Blogsites” you said you would tell me more about?**

The popularity of WordPress software for blogging has led to an explosion of add ons and plug ins to Wordpress.org’s software that enables one to easily have all the advantages of a blog with all the advantages of a website. Here is a good example on value billing by the way:

<http://www.verasage.com>

This one is less “pretty” than the Verasage site but still a good example.

<http://thewordpresswizard.com/>

This one has a lot of video on it.

<http://fromthedeskofjeffherring.com>

This one is a blogsite by one of the biggest information marketers on the Internet:

<http://www.alexmandossian.com/>

The lesson here is things are always evolving on the internet in marketing that is for sure! If you want to learn even more on this topic go to [www.WordPressBlogsites.com](http://www.WordPressBlogsites.com) and buy the book Does This Blog Site Make My Wallet Look Fat?. Oh, this is also a blogsite of course.

### **What do I need to be concerned about around websites/blogs with respect to bar rules and ethical considerations?**

Yes indeed and it is all very confusing since it varies by state. One of the Internet’s authorities (and an attorney) Dennis Kennedy at [www.DennisKennedy.com](http://www.DennisKennedy.com) says the rules for attorneys are “impossibly confusing”. Mainly you need to find out from your bar if the advertising rules apply to websites or blogs and if there are specific rules for websites or blogs. Finally, some states might even require very specific disclaimers on the site. Bottom line you need to check in your state. If you want to see a specific disclaimer for a blog site go to Dennis’s blog at [DennisKennedy.com/blog/](http://DennisKennedy.com/blog/).

## Where else can I read about implementing Internet marketing?

One place to look is at Google itself. Search engines do not tell us all of the factors or details they look at in determining page ranks on their search engine. This is proprietary information for them. Google does tell us in general what they are looking for in page ranking. If you read what they say at: <http://www.google.com/support/webmasters> you will see what I have been talking about is indeed what Google is looking for and if you do what Google wants you will be right with all of the others almost certainly.

I also found the following books to be of value for “newbies”:

The Ultimate Guide to Electronic Marketing for Small Business by Tom Antion

Call To Action by Bryan Eisenberg and Jeffrey Eisenberg

Pay Per Click Search Engine Marketing For Dummies by Peter Kent

Blogging for Business: Everything You Need to Know and Why You Should Care by Shel Holtz and Ted Demopoulos

